

As defined by Wisconsin's SIEC:

“Interoperability is the ability of public safety officials to share information via voice signals on demand, in real time, when needed, and as authorized.”

What Can You Do?

A coordinated approach among public safety officials and government leaders is essential to improving radio interoperability. Traditionally, we've purchased and upgraded our radio systems to meet only the operational needs of the agencies involved. That needs to change. Here's what you can do to help:

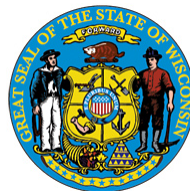
Encourage Partnerships. Local leaders can help break down barriers that keep us from working together. Develop multi-jurisdiction, cross-discipline strategies and plans for a coordinated response to disasters.

Spread the Word. Everyone needs to understand the benefits of interoperability—and the risks without it. Make sure your neighbors, elected officials, and local public safety professionals know about the need for interoperable public safety communications.

Embrace Statewide Standards. The need for standardized equipment and operational practices is critical to statewide interoperability success. Invest only in P25-compliant equipment and be aware of standards adopted by the SIEC.

Make Interoperability a Top Priority. Federal grants are available to get us started, but these funds will only go so far. Make funding for local system upgrades and operations a top priority.

Wisconsin's State Interoperability Executive Council



For more information about
the SIEC, please visit
www.siec.wi.gov

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Wisconsin's State Interoperability Executive Council



**A Local-State Partnership to
Implement Statewide Public
Safety Radio Interoperability**



We Can't Talk

Oklahoma City, September 11, and Hurricane Katrina—all catastrophic events that required immediate response from local officials. Personnel from state and local fire, police, and EMS agencies answered the call, working long hours under extraordinarily difficult conditions to save as many lives and as much property as possible.

At each crisis, though, an unnecessary complication made the work more difficult—and contributed to greater loss of life.

- ♦ In Oklahoma City, firefighters and police used runners to carry messages from one command center to another.
- ♦ At the World Trade Centers, police received a radio message to evacuate; firefighters did not.
- ♦ In New Orleans, responders were limited to a handful of CB-like "mutual aid" radio channels that were inadequate and overwhelmed by emergency traffic.

Their radios, the very lifeline of public safety professionals, were incompatible. Because they couldn't communicate using their public safety radio systems, they also couldn't efficiently organize their efforts and effectively mobilize resources.

Whenever, Wherever Needed

The ability of public safety professionals to communicate quickly and coordinate activities effectively can mean the difference between life and death. Interoperability refers to the ability of public safety emergency responders to work seamlessly with

other systems or products without any special effort. Wireless communications interoperability specifically refers to the ability of public safety officials to share information via voice signals on demand, in real time, when needed, and as authorized.

It creates communications that support effective incident and emergency management activities—and ultimately the continuity of operations and government functions during emergencies and catastrophic events.

"When an emergency occurs, the most critical element of a response is communication."

Governor Jim Doyle

A Collaborative Approach

By its very nature, interoperability requires the commitment and cooperation of the agencies involved. Developing and implementing a statewide solution that involves literally thousands of independent public safety organizations requires the support of top officials and strong leadership.

To make sure that regional projects are coordinated and ensure that taxpayer money is spent efficiently, Governor Doyle has established the State Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC). The SIEC is:

- ♦ Developing a strategy and timeline for achieving statewide interoperability.
- ♦ Recommending funding priorities to the Office of Justice Assistance (OJA) for the use of over \$8 million in federal homeland security grants.
- ♦ Setting technical and operational standards for Wisconsin interoperable public safety systems.

Leadership

SIEC members are appointed by the Governor. They represent a cross-section of fire and rescue, law enforcement, emergency medical services, and public safety communications agencies from throughout the state. Each member of the SIEC has extensive expertise in their field and shares the Governor's commitment to finding workable and cost-effective statewide interoperability solutions. Current SIEC members include:

Mindy Allen, *EMS Project Manager, Green County*
 Secretary Frank Busalacchi, *WI Dept. of Transportation*
 (Represented by Superintendent David Collins, *WI State Patrol*)
 Chief Neil Cameron, *City of Appleton Fire Dept.*
 Chief Thomas Czaja, *Village of Fox Point Police Dept.*
 Secretary P. Scott Hassett, *WI Dept. of Natural Resources*
 (Represented by Randy Stark, *Chief Warden, WI DNR*)
 Sheriff Ann Hraychuck, *Polk County*
 Matt Miszewski, *Chief Information Officer, State of Wisconsin*
 Mayor Douglas Oitzinger, *City of Marinette*
 Sheriff Brian Rahn, *Washington County*
 Chief Sue Riseling, *SIEC Vice-Chair /UW-Madison Police Dept.*
 Ben Schliesman, *Emergency Mgmt Director, Kenosha County*
 Chief David Spenner, *City of Racine Police Dept.*
 Dave Steingraber, *SIEC Chair and Executive Director, WI OJA*
 Major General Al Wilkening, *Adjutant General and Governor's Homeland Security Advisor, WI Dept. of Military Affairs*
 (Represented by Johnnie Smith, *Administrator, WI Emerg. Mgmt*)

